

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 13-20—sSB 874

Public Health Committee

**AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES' STATUTES**

SUMMARY: This act creates a 23-member Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council, as a successor to an independent council established in connection with a previous pilot program, to advise the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) commissioner on autism issues.

The act limits appointed members of the State Interagency Birth-to-Three Coordinating Council to two consecutive terms, although they may continue to serve until a successor is appointed. It also increases the council's membership by one. It does so by adding the state coordinators of early childhood special education and education for homeless children and youth, in place of an unspecified State Department of Education representative with policy making authority chosen by the commissioner.

By law, child health care providers, schools, and specified others must refer parents of a child younger than age three who is suspected of or at risk of having a developmental delay to the Birth-to-Three program, unless the person or entity knows the child has already been referred. Prior law required such a referral within two working days of the person identifying the child in this manner. The act instead requires the referral as soon as possible but not later than seven calendar days after the identification. This change conforms to a change in federal regulations (34 CFR § 303.303).

The act also makes minor, technical, and clarifying changes to DDS statutes.
EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2013, except the provisions creating the advisory council are effective July 1, 2013.

§§ 1-2 — AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER ADVISORY COUNCIL

The act creates an Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council, effective July 1, 2013. Effective October 1, 2013, it substitutes a reference to this new council for a reference to a previously established independent council charged with advising the DDS commissioner on all matters relating to autism.

The council created by the act consists of the following members:

1. the commissioners of DDS, children and families, education, mental health and addiction services, public health, rehabilitation services, and social services, or their designees;
2. the Office of Policy and Management secretary, or his designee;
3. the executive director of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, or his designee;
4. two people with autism spectrum disorder, one each appointed by the

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- governor and House speaker;
5. two parents or guardians of children with autism spectrum disorder, one each appointed by the governor and Senate minority leader;
 6. two parents or guardians of adults with autism spectrum disorder, one each appointed by the Senate president pro tempore and House majority leader;
 7. two advocates for people with autism spectrum disorder, one each appointed by the governor and House speaker;
 8. two licensed professionals working in the field of autism spectrum disorder, one each appointed by the governor and Senate majority leader;
 9. two people who provide services for people with autism spectrum disorder, one each appointed by the governor and House minority leader; and
 10. two representatives of a higher education institution in the state with experience in the field of autism spectrum disorder, one each appointed by the governor and Senate president pro tempore.

Under the act, the council's chairpersons are the DDS commissioner or his designee and one person elected by the council members. The council must make rules for conducting its affairs and meet at least four times per year and at such other times as the chairpersons request. Council members serve without compensation.

The council must advise the DDS commissioner on all matters relating to autism, including (1) policies and programs for people with autism spectrum disorder, (2) services provided by DDS' Division of Autism Spectrum Disorder Services, and (3) implementing the recommendations of the autism feasibility study (a study required by PA 11-6 to consider the needs of people with autism spectrum disorder). The council may also recommend policy and program changes to the commissioner to improve support services for people with autism spectrum disorder.

The council will terminate on June 30, 2018.

BACKGROUND

Related Act

PA 13-84 requires certain health insurance policies to at least maintain current benefit levels for insured people diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder before the release of the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). (The DSM-V was released on May 18, 2013.)

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